

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the preparation of water-soluble or water-swellaible homopolymers or copolymers by homopolymerization or copolymerization of free-radically polymerizable water-soluble and/or water-dispersible monomers, optionally with further comonomers and optionally at least one crosslinker, in an inverse emulsion polymerization in the presence of a redox initiator pair, wherein sodiumperoxodisulfate or hydrogen peroxide as an oxidizing agent and 2-hydroxy-2-sulfonatoacetic acid disodium salt as a reducing agent are the redox initiator pair,

comprising:

- a) dissolution of at least one water-in-oil emulsifier selected from the group consisting of alkylbenzenesulfonic acids, sulfonated fatty acids, sulfosuccinates, fatty alcohol sulfates, alkylphenolsulfates, fatty alcohol ether sulfates, alkylphenyl ethoxylates, primary alcohol ethoxylates, fatty acid ethoxylates, alcohol amide ethoxylates, fatty amine ethoxylates, ethylene oxide/propylene oxide block copolymers, alkyl polyglycosides, quaternized amine alkoxyates, alkylbetaines, alkylamidobetaines and sulfobetaines, or at least one protective colloid in a hydrophobic liquid inert for the polymerization as a result of which an oil phase is formed;
- b) dissolution or dispersion of the monomers and optionally the further comonomers, an oil-in-water emulsifier and the redox initiator pair in water, as result of which an aqueous phase is formed;
- c) mixing of the oil phase and the aqueous phase until the aqueous phase is emulsified in the oil phase; and
- d) homopolymerization or copolymerization of the monomers used and optionally the further comonomers.

2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein free-radically polymerizable carboxylic acids, or salts or derivatives thereof are used as monomers.
3. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein a mixture of acrylic acid and/or salt thereof and acrylamide is used as monomers.
4. (Cancelled).
5. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein no transition metal compounds are added in the process.
6. (Currently Amended) A homopolymer or copolymer ~~preparable~~ prepared by a process of claim 1.
7. (Previously Presented) A homopolymer or copolymer as claimed in claim 6, which has a residual monomer content of at most 5% by weight, based on the total mass of the homopolymer or copolymer.
8. (Previously Presented) A water-in-oil emulsion comprising an oil phase which comprises at least one water-in-oil emulsifier or at least one protective colloid in an inert hydrophobic liquid, and an aqueous phase emulsified in the oil phase which comprises at least one homopolymer or copolymer as claimed in claim 6.
9. (Previously Presented) A water-in-oil emulsion as claimed in claim 8, which has a speck content of at most 0.5%, based on the total mass of the W/O emulsion.
10. (Previously Presented) A solid composition comprising at least one water-in-oil emulsifier or at least one protective colloid, at least one oil-in-water emulsifier and at least one homopolymer or copolymer as claimed in claim 6.

11-13. (Cancelled).

14. (Previously Presented) A printing paste comprising homopolymer or copolymer as claimed in claim 6, which has a gel body content of at most 0.5%, based on the total mass of the printing paste.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Currently Amended) A method of avoiding induction times during the inverse emulsion polymerization of free-radically polymerizable water-soluble and/or water-dispersible monomers, optionally with further comonomers, during which no transition metal compounds are added, comprising the step of using a redox initiator pair,
wherein sodiumperoxodisulfate or hydrogen peroxide as an oxidizing agent and 2-hydroxy-2-sulfinatoacetic acid disodium salt as a reducing agent are the redox initiator pair, and wherein the inverse emulsion polymerization is conducted according to claim 1.

17. (Previously Presented) A method of thickening printing pastes comprising the step of adding a water-in-oil emulsion as claimed in claim 8.

18. (Previously Presented) A method of thickening printing pastes comprising the step of adding a homopolymer or a copolymer as claimed in claim 6.

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 2, wherein no transition metal compounds are added in the process.

23. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 3, wherein no transition metal compounds are added in the process.

24. (Cancelled).